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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 21, 2004

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for December 21, 2004. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

TERCUMAN / SABAH / OZGU GUNDEM / EKSPRES / EVRENSEL / RADIKAL / CUMHURİYET / MILLİYET / ZAMAN / HURRIYET: Having discovered that one of the wolves that attacked and bit 15 people in Yuksekova, Hakkari, had rabies virus, all the people exposed were vaccinated against rabies. However, the vaccination has not been effective against severe bites on the head, which are very close to the brain. The lack of special medication for treatment in Turkey or its late arrival from abroad may cause mortality.

ZAMAN / HURRIYET (CUKUROVA) / EKSPRES: Nearly six hectares of forest burned in various parts of Osmaniye. It is suspected that the fire spread from an unextinguished picnic fire.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Ezdin Batur is the father of Adnan Batur, who is an (alleged) member of HPG (People's Protection Forces). Ezdin Batur said that Turkish Armed Forces killed Adnan Batur in the vicinity of Zivinge village and the body of his son is now missing. According to Ezdin Batur, his son was killed after being caught alive during an operation conducted on October 24th. Ezdin Batur obtained this information from village guards.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Attorney Zulfu Dundar is still not acquitted in the second hearing of the lawsuit that was brought against him on the grounds that he exploited his capacity as an attorney. Attorney Zulfu Dundar brought a charge against police who allegedly degraded and paraded two children about the town after putting feces on their faces. The children were detained on April 23rd, 2003, as a result of allegedly making some remarks to their teacher.

OZGUR GUNDEM / EVRENSEL: On December 19, 2000, an operation called "Return to Life" resulted in the death of some 30 prisoners. (Note: The operation was initiated by security forces which occupied prisons in response to hunger strikes security forces claimed were enforced against prisoners' wills by radical organizations. End note.) This incident was remembered and denounced during demonstrations held in Adana and Van this week with banners saying "Perpetrators of the December 19th Massacre should be found," and "We paid a price, and it is your turn to pay it."

MILLI GAZETE / OZGUR GUNDEM: "Upper and lower respiratory tract infections are on the increase during winter," says Mesut Colak, an internal diseases specialist at Mus State University. About two thirds of the patients treated in the polyclinics of Mus State University are suffering from common cold.

CUMHURİYET: Attorneys from the Bar Association of the UK are going to prepare reports about the Kiziltepe case. Attorneys Roberta Harwey and Johanna Wood, who are conducting a "Kurdish Human Rights Project," are now obtaining information from the family of Ahmet Kaymaz and from the witnesses of the incident.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

1. VAKIT / BOLGE / EKSPRES / TURKIYE: AKP Provincial Chairpersons and AKP Chairpersons of Administrative Districts paid a visit to Fevzi Kilic, General Director of CUKOBIRLIK (Cooperative Organization for Agricultural Product Sales in Cukurova), to get information about the activities of CUKOBIRLIK, as well as to discuss and address the problems the group experienced. Kilic said, "If local politicians and farmers support us and maintain the environment of cooperation, CUKOBIRLIK can easily solve every problem."

2. VAKIT / BOLGE / EKSPRES / TURKIYE / ZAMAN: Fevzi Kilic, General Director of CUKOBIRLIK said "Our organization is growing and becoming powerful even as it is getting smaller (leaner) thanks to the process of gaining an autonomous status. For 30 years as a state-run organization, CUKOBIRLIK was a burden to the state. But that period ended when the Law on Cooperative Organizations for Agricultural Product Sales was enacted in the year 2000 (allowing CUKOBIRLIK more autonomy)."

REID